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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 000468

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - TEXT

FROM U.S. MISSION TO UN AGENCIES IN ROME

STATE FOR IO/EDA, IO/S/SC, AND L/UNA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AORC](#) [KUNR](#) [KUNR](#) [FAQAORC](#) [FAO](#)

SUBJECT: FAO: HELMS-BIDEN - CURRENT STATUS

REF: (A) STATE 9952, (B) 11/23/01 EMAIL PODOLSKY/

HEILEMAN, (C) 1/16/02 EMAIL HEILEMAN/PODOLSKY, (D) 01
STATE 178759, (E) 00 ROME 3137

1. THIS CABLE SUMMARIZES THE CURRENT STATUS OF WHERE FAO STANDS REGARDING HELMS-BIDEN PROVISIONS ON (A) THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FUNCTION, (B) PROGRAM EVALUATION, AND (C) SUNSET PROVISIONS. MISSION REQUESTS DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE IF ANY FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED BEFORE A RECOMMENDATION COULD BE MADE TO THE SECRETARY THAT FAO HAS MET THE TRANCHE THREE REQUIREMENTS.

INSPECTOR GENERAL

2. PER REF A, FAO HAS ADEQUATELY MET ALL H-B REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FUNCTION.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

3. FOLLOWING ARE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS POSED IN REF B. THEY SUMMARIZE THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY FAO'S OFFICE OF PROGRAM, BUDGET, AND EVALUATION THAT WAS FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT IN REF C.

-- A. ARE "AUTO-EVALUATIONS" REQUIRED FOR PROGRAMS OTHER THAN TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS?

IN PRINCIPLE ALL PROGRAMS, OTHER THAN FIELD PROJECTS, ARE SUBJECT TO AUTO-EVALUATIONS. HOWEVER, GUIDELINES ARE YET TO BE DEVELOPED FOR AUTO-EVALUATIONS OF OPERATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES -- FAO EXPECTS TO HAVE THEM COMPLETED BY AUTUMN. THE TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, ABOUT 45 PERCENT OF FAO'S PROGRAM BUDGET, ARE THE FIRST PRIORITY. FIELD PROJECTS, AS OUTLINED IN THE DG'S BULLETIN, ARE SUBJECT TO INDEPENDENT TRI-PARTITE EVALUATIONS OR TO "THEMATIC EVALUATIONS."

(NOTE: DEFINITIONS OF THESE VARIOUS TYPES OF PROGRAMS ARE FOUND IN THE CHARTS OF REF C.)

-- B. WHAT ARE CONTINUING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES?

PARAGRAPH 62 OF THE MEDIUM TERM PLAN DEFINES THE THREE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES UNDER A SUBSTANTIVE FAO PROGRAM: TECHNICAL PROJECTS (SET ACTIONS WITH A DURATION OF UP TO SIX YEARS), CONTINUING PROGRAMS (A PRODUCTION OF OUTPUTS WHICH ARE NOT OF A TIME-BOUND NATURE, SUCH AS THE COLLECTION OF STATISTICS), AND TECHNICAL SERVICE AGREEMENTS (SERVICES WHICH CANNOT BE PROJECTED FAR IN ADVANCE SUCH AS TECHNICAL ADVICE TO A COUNTRY).

-- C. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ANNUAL ASSESSMENT AND AN AUTO EVALUATION?

AN ANNUAL ASSESSMENT IS FOR IN-HOUSE MONITORING BY THE WORKING-LEVEL OFFICERS INVOLVED. AN AUTO EVALUATION IS A MORE FORMAL PROCEDURE WHICH LEADS TO RECOMMENDATIONS BY PROGRAM MANAGERS TO SENIOR MANAGEMENT REGARDING THE PROGRAM'S FUTURE. AS A MORE FORMAL PROCEDURE, THE AUTO EVALUATION PROCESS WOULD INVOLVE "EXTERNAL INPUTS" (E.G., CONSULTANTS OR MEMBERS OF PEER GROUPS SUCH AS IFAD OR AN NGO). IT WOULD NORMALLY BE CARRIED OUT AT LEAST ONCE EVERY SIX YEARS, AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT ACTS ON ITS RECOMMENDATIONS AS PART OF THE MEDIUM TERM PLAN PROCEDURE.

-- D. AS REQUESTED, SECTION 107.11 FROM THE ORGANIZATION STAFF MANUAL, DEFINING THE ROLE OF THE EVALUATION SERVICE, WAS FORWARDED TO IO/S IN REF C.

-- E. WILL FUTURE FAO PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORTS (PER) ADDRESS AUTO EVALUATIONS?

A SYNTHESIS OF AUTO EVALUATION REPORTS PREPARED EVERY BIENNIAL WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL AND TO THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE. ONLY A SUMMARY OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE PER. AS A PROGRAM COMMITTEE DOCUMENT, HOWEVER, THE SYNTHESIS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ALL MEMBERS THROUGH THE INTERNET. THE COMMITTEE'S VIEWS ON

THE SYNTHESIS WILL BE INCLUDED IN ITS REPORT TO THE COUNCIL.

-- F. HOW WILL THE DG REPORT RESULTS OF AUTO EVALUATIONS AND PROPOSE TO CHANGE/TERMINATE PROGRAMS?

GUIDELINES REQUIRE THAT AUTO EVALUATIONS INCLUDE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR THE NEXT MTP PERIOD. TECHNICAL PROJECTS WILL LAPSE UNLESS PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD A CASE FOR CONTINUATION. PROPOSALS MUST INDICATE WHETHER CONTINUING PROGRAMS SHOULD BE CONTINUED, MODIFIED, OR TERMINATED.

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THE SYNTHESIS GOING TO THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE WILL LIST ALL THESE PROPOSALS.

-- G. THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE RECEIVES INDEPENDENT EVALUATION REPORTS THAT IT SELECTS. CAN IT ALSO SELECT INDIVIDUAL AUTO EVALUATION REPORTS FOR A CLOSER REVIEW? THE VOLUME OF AUTO EVALUATION REPORTS PREPARED EACH BIENNIAL, AND THE COST OF TRANSLATING THESE INTO FIVE LANGUAGES, MAKES IT IMPRACTICAL TO PROVIDE THESE TO THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE. (159 TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAM AUTO EVALUATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE PRODUCED, MOST OF THEM PROBABLY BUNCHED TOWARD THE END OF THIS FIRST SIX-YEAR MTP PERIOD.) THE COMMITTEE RECEIVES ONLY THE SYNTHESIS OF ALL AUTO EVALUATIONS. IN PRINCIPLE, THE COMMITTEE COULD ON AN "EXCEPTIONAL BASIS" REQUEST A COPY OF AN AUTO EVALUATION, BUT AS AN INTERNAL FAO DOCUMENT IT WOULD REMAIN THE DG'S PREROGATIVE TO ACCEDE TO SUCH A REQUEST.

-- H. HOW WOULD THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FAO COUNCIL ON IMPROVING OR TERMINATING PROGRAMS?

THE COMMITTEE HAS TWO MEANS BY WHICH TO COMMENT: MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS THROUGH ITS REPORTING ON THE SYNTHESIS OF AUTO EVALUATIONS, AND/OR USE THE MEDIUM TERM PLAN TO EXPRESS ITS VIEWS ON PROGRAM PRIORITIES.

SUNSET (U.S. POLICY)

14. THE UNITED STATES MISSION CONTINUES TO SEEK ACTION BY FAO IMPLEMENTING SPECIFIC TERMINATION DATES FOR ALL PROGRAMS, SO THAT PROGRAMS WILL NOT BE RENEWED UNLESS AN EVALUATION DEMONSTRATES ITS CONTINUED RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS -- A.K.A., SUNSET PROVISIONS. OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS OUR VIEWS HAVE PLAYED A ROLE IN THE FAO'S MOVES TO DEVELOP A FAMILY OF NEW PLANNING, BUDGETING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY DOCUMENTS. THE TWO CORE DOCUMENTS, THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND THE MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2002-2007 (MTP), REFLECT A SIGNIFICANT SHIFT TOWARD SUNSETTING AND RESULT-BASED BUDGETING. THE MTP APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER 2000 COUNCIL DEFINES FORTY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE FAO'S TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS AS TECHNICAL PROJECTS, MEANING THEY HAVE A DURATION OF NO MORE THAN SIX YEARS AND CANNOT BE EXTENDED UNLESS EVALUATIONS CONFIRM THEIR EFFECTIVENESS. AS DESCRIBED ABOVE, OTHER TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS ALSO REQUIRE AN EVALUATION TO DETERMINE RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS AT LEAST ONCE EVERY SIX YEARS. THIS REPRESENTS A MARKED IMPROVEMENT OVER THE 2000-01 FAO PROGRAM OF WORK AND BUDGET BUT WE CONTINUE TO SEEK A STRENGTHENING OF SUNSET PROVISIONS.

15. CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS WITH FAO OFFICIALS AND WITH OTHER FAO MEMBERS SUGGEST THAT THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO DO THIS IS THROUGH SEEKING CONTINUED STRENGTHENING OF THE MTP AND THE EVALUATION PROCESS. MANY FAO MEMBERS ARE LEERY OF OUR MOTIVATION, BELIEVING THAT WE SEEK SUNSETTING NOT AS A STEP TOWARD BETTER MANAGEMENT BUT AS A MEANS OF REDUCING OUR CONTRIBUTION. A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE TERMINATION DATE ON ALL PROJECTS IS UNLIKELY TO CLEAR EITHER FAO'S FINANCE COMMITTEE OR COUNCIL, AND WILL MAKE SOME MEMBERS MORE SUSPICIOUS OF ANY EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE MTP. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM THE U.S. PERMREP ON SUNSETTING AT THE MAY 2000 JOINT PROGRAM/FINANCE COMMITTEE, THE DIRECTOR OF FAO'S OFFICE OF PROGRAM, BUDGET AND EVALUATION URGED THAT MEMBERS SHOW PATIENCE IN PUSHING FOR CHANGE (REF E).

16. THE MISSION WILL CONTINUE PRIVATELY TO STRESS TO

MEMBERS THE MANAGERIAL BENEFITS OF SUNSET PROVISIONS, AND THE FACT THAT FAR FROM REDUCING FAO'S BUDGET, THESE IMPROVEMENTS ARE LIKELY TO MAKE DONORS MORE WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DISCUSS INFORMALLY A SUNSET RESOLUTION AMONG DONORS IN THE GENEVA GROUP. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT BOTH THE 1999 AND THE 2000 ANNUAL GENEVA GROUP REPORTS INCLUDED A PUSH FOR BETTER RESULTS-BASED BUDGETING ON THE GROUP'S "TO-DO" LIST. THE 2001 REPORT, CURRENTLY BEING DRAFTED, WILL DO LIKEWISE.
HEILEMAN

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